The

Review of Religions

Edited by Mirza BASHIR AHMAD, M.A.

Vol. XXXI MARCH, 1932 No. 3

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

CONTENTS

	Page
THE HOLY PROPHET'S MARRIAGE WITH AYESHA —(Translation)	69
THE TEACHINGS OF KRISHNA	79
TRUTH OF THE HOLY PROPHET AND HIS SUPERIORITY OVER ALL OTHER PROPHETS —(Translation)	89
ATONEMENT (Mr. Abdullah, R. Scott)	95
OUR MISSION NEWS	99
APPRECIATION	100

Head Office :
QADIAN,
Punjab : India.

Branch Office :
THE LONDON MOSQUE,
63, Melrose Road, Southfields, London, S.W. 18.

The Ahmadiyya Moveme

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded by Hazrat Ahmad Promised Messiah and Mehdi and the expected Messenger nations In the spirit and power of all the earlier prophe came to serve and reinterpret the final and eternal teachings down by God in the Holy Quran. The Movement therefor presents the true and real Islam and seeks to uplift humanity establish peace throughout the world. Hazrat Ahmad die 1908, and the present Head of the Movement is his second cessor, Hazrat Mirza Bashir ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, under w direction the Movement has established Missions in many of the world, the following being the addresses of some of them

(1) THE LONDON MOSQUE, 63, Melrose Road, Southfields, London, S. W. 18, Eng

(2) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, Sufi M. R. Bengalee, M.A., 56 E. Congress St., Suite 1307 Chicago, Illinois, U. S. Ame

(3) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT, Commercial Road, Salt Pond, Gold Coast, West Af

(4) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT, Rose Hill, Mauri

(5) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT, 25-27, Alof Street, Okepopo, Lagos, Nigeria, W Af

(6) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT, Box No. 305, G. P. O. Perth, W. Austra

(7) THE CENTRAL (E.A.) AHMADIYYA MUSLIM ASSOCIATION, P. O. Box No. 554, Nairobi (Kenya Colony).

(8) MAULVI ABUL 'ATA, Maulvi Fazil Sharial Burj, Ha Palestine.

(9) MAULVI RAHMAT ALI, c/o Daved Kampoeng, Djawa, Padang, S. W

APPRECIATION

The Editor of " Djawa Tengah Review," Semarang, (Java), in its issue of December 1931 writes as follows :—

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

...." Review of Religions" ada satoe tijdschrift di bawah pimpinan Mr. Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M. A., dalem bahasa Inggris, dan toedjoeannja jaitoe boeat oesoet soeal-soeal agama, dan teroetama boeat belahken Agama Islam jang doeloe banjak disalah artiken oleh bangsa Barat, tapi sekarang keliatannja telah mendjalar sampe di bebrapa negri-negri besar di Europa sampepoen di Amerika. Banjak orang-orang Barat jang terpladjar tinggi sekarang moelai perhatiken Agama Islam.....

TRANSLATION

..... The " Review of Religions " is an English Magazine edited by Mr. Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A. It deals with religious matters alone. It refutes in particular the false notions created about Islam in the past by the writers of the West. Through this magazine Islam is being spread now-a-days specially in Europe and America, and consequently the educated people of Europe are taking keen interest in Islam..... ....

[*N. B.*—We propose to publish other appreciations in future—*Ed. R. R.*]

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Will be awarded free of charge for one year to those energetic young men who will secure a least Ten subscribers for it.

Rise all, never let this Opportunity Pass by

151

Books for Oriental Scholars Interested in Islam, Arabic and Persian.

The Holy Quran, Part I. (English Translation with Commentary).	4/
The Teachings of Islam: English	4/-
Do. French	2/-
The Islamic Mode of Worship (illustrated)	1/-
The True Islam	6/-
A Present to the Amir of Afghanistan (Persian)	7/-
Poems of Ahmad (Arabic)	1/6
Nubza—Selection from Ahmad's Persian Poems	1/-
Ahmadiyyat (the paper read at the Religious Conference, London)	1/6
The Teachings of Ahmad	1/-
A Present to the Prince of Wales	1/6
Character Sketch of Ahmad	1/6
A Short Life of Ahmad	1/6
Minanur Rahman Proves that Arabic is the mother of all languages	2/-
Indian Problem	1/-
Islam (Dutch)	1/-
The Swoon Theory (German)	6d.
The Soul of Islam	2d.
Extracts from the Holy Quran and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad	2/-
Ahmad, his Claims and Teachings	4/-
Life and Teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad	6d.
Muhammad, the liberator of Women	3d. (5 for 1/-).

To be had from -

The Manager, Book Depot, 63, Melrose Road,
London, S.W. 18.

Regd. No. L-2941

The Review of Religions

Deals with the Beauties of Islam in Comparison with other Faiths

Since 1902 the "Review of Religions" has been carrying the Message of Truth to the furthest corners of the globe. It has been successfully refuting the charges levelled by the enemies of Islam against the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him). Its services have been no less than those of a missionary, particularly in Europe, America and Africa. It has guided thousands to the path of truth. It has been sent to those places where no missionary could yet be sent, and it has approached those individuals who were groping in the dark and were searching for spiritual light.

Annual subscriptions, Rs 5 ; for Collegiates, Rs. 3-8 ;
Foreign, 10s. ; Single copy, As. 8

Scale of Charges for Advertisements

Full page	... Rs. 6	per insertion
Half page	... Rs. 4	,, ,,
Quarter page	... Rs. 2-8	,, ,,
One-eighth page	... Rs. 2	,, ,,

All remittances should be sent to the MANAGER,
THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS
P. O. Qadian, Punjab (*India*)

"SUNRISE" ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY JOURNAL

RATE OF SUBSCRIPTIONS—Yearly, Rs. 10 ; 6 months, Rs. 5-8 ;
3 months, Rs. 3.

All remittances to the MANAGER, "The SUNRISE"
Fleming Road, Lahore

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Facilities for the Study of Islam

Seekers after truth, who are interested in Islam and want to know more about it with a view to understand it and make it a principle of their life are requested to write to the Imam, First London Mosque, 63, Melrose Road, London, S. W.-18.

Telegraphic Address :—Islamabad, London.

Printed at the Ripon Printing Press, Bull Road, Lahore, by Mirza Mohd. Sadiq, and published by Sheikh Abdur Rahman Qadiani for Sadar Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, Qadian, Punjab, India.

The
Review of Religions

Edited by Mirza BASHIR AHMAD, M.A.

Vol. XXXI MARCH, 1932 No. 3

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent and the most Merciful
We praise Him and invoke His blessings upon
His exalted Prophet.

"A prophet came unto the world and the world accepted him not, but God shall accept him and establish his truth with mighty signs."

THE HOLY PROPHET'S MARRIAGE WITH AYESHA*

BY MIRZA BASHIR AHMAD, M.A.

THE QUESTION OF AYESHA'S AGE

After the death of Khadija, the Holy Prophet of Islam married Ayesha, daughter of Abu Bakr. The marriage took place in the month of Shawwal in the 10th year of his mission.† Ayesha was then seven years' old,‡ but it appears that even at that time her physical development was unusually good, otherwise, Khaula, daughter of Hakim, who proposed her name to the Holy Prophet for marriage, would not have thought of her. As, however, she had not yet attained to the age of

* Translated from Urdu original by Maulvi Sher Ali, B.A.

† Ist'ab, p. 765 ; II, 7 and 8.

‡ Ibn-i-Hisham, Vol. III, ch. Azwajun-Nabi.

puberty, therefore, although the marriage ceremony was performed, yet she was not given away to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him), but continued to live with her parents as before. In the second year of Hijra *i.e.*, five years after the marriage when Ayesha was twelve years old and had attained the age of puberty, Abu Bakr personally came to the Holy Prophet and asked permission for Ayesha to be conducted to his house*. Thereupon the Holy Prophet arranged for the payment of dowry, (for in those days it was customary to pay the dowry in cash), and Ayesha was conducted from her parent's house to that of the Holy Prophet in the month of Shawwal in the second year of Hijra.

The question of Ayesha's age at the time when she was given away to the Holy Prophet has become a disputed point in these days. In history and the books of tradition her age at the aforesaid time has been put down as nine years. Even *Bukhari* quotes the tradition which represents Ayesha as saying that she was nine years old when she was conducted to the house of the Holy Prophet at Medina, and it is this tradition which has been generally followed by historians.

On the contrary, there are certain writers of the present day who have tried to prove on the basis of different considerations that the age of Ayesha at that time was 14 years or even 16 years. Although we do not concur with these recent writers in their conclusions, yet when we carefully examine the question we have to hold that those writers, who think that her age at the aforesaid time was nine years, are not right, but that she was at that time twelve or nearly twelve.

The reason why the old writers have erred with regard to the question of Ayesha's age lies in the fact that they took her own estimate of her age given in authentic traditions to be absolutely correct, and therefore they paid no heed to any other evidence, although, as every sensible man can see, the authenticity of a tradition and the correctness of an estimate are two quite different things. It is quite possible that the traditions

*Tabari, as quoted by Zurqani, Vol. III, p. 231.

representing Ayesha as nine years of age at the time in question should be perfectly authentic, but that her own estimate of her age should be erroneous, for we see that people often err in judging their age.

On the other hand the recent writers who, holding the old opinion to be erroneous, have sought to make independent enquiry, have also erred, for they have abandoned the direct and plain course of investigation and have followed an ambiguous and, as it were, a circuitous way which can not satisfy the mind. Every sensible man will admit that the safest and easiest way of determining the age of Ayesha at the time in question would be to find out, on the one hand, the date of her birth, and on the other, the date of her admission into the Holy Prophet's *harem*, for when both these dates are definitely determined, there can remain no doubt as to what her age was on the day when she entered the house of the Holy Prophet.

We first take the question of the date of her birth. Ibn-i Sa'd records the following tradition in his *Tabaqat* :—

كانت عائشة ولات السنة الرابعة من النبوة في اولها.

i.e., "Ayesha was born in the beginning of the fourth year of the Holy Prophet's mission." I have not come across any other tradition referring definitely to the date of Ayesha's birth in the writings of early historians save the one quoted above, nor do the collections of *Hadith* contain any tradition bearing on this subject.

Thus the date of Ayesha's birth is easily determined, *i.e.*, it was the beginning of the fourth year of the Holy Prophet's mission.

Now we take up the other question which pertains to the date of Ayesha's admission into the Holy Prophet's house. With regard to this, indeed, there is disagreement in the traditions,—some putting the event in Shawwal, *1 A. H.*, and others in Shawwal, *2 A. H.* But on careful consideration, we find that the reports giving the latter date are more correct.

The report giving Shawwal, *1 A. H.* as the date in question is really based on Ibn-i-S'ad who traces his tradition to Ayesha through a formal chain of reporters.* Most of the historians have followed this report†, but although Ibn-i-Sa'd is personally a reliable authority, yet one of the narrators through whom he traces his report to Ayesha is Waqidi, as to whose unreliability and untrustworthiness and even untruthfulness almost all critics are agreed.‡ The mere report of Waqidi, which clashes with other reports, cannot therefore, serve as a basis for an historical event. As against this, authorities like Allama Nauwi, Allama Aini, Allama Qustulani and a number of other critics hold the other report which gives Shawwal, *2 A. H.* as the date in question, to be correct and preferable.§ Allama Nauwi has declared very clearly and emphatically that compared with the latter report, the former is unreliable and must be rejected¶. Hence there is no reason that we should reject the sounder opinion merely because historians have generally followed the other report. The real cause that has led these historians to adopt the weaker tradition is that it is more in accordance with the nine years estimate of Ayesha's age mentioned in authentic traditions. This is in fact plainly admitted by the historians themselves. Zurqani, for instance, clearly says that the tradition giving Shawwal, *2 A. H.* as the date under discussion cannot be accepted, *for, its acceptance implies the rejection of the authentic traditions which gives nine years as the age of Ayesha i.e.*, in that case we shall have to believe that Ayesha was more than nine years old. It is, however, clear that when the question of age itself and the very traditions bearing on that subject are under consideration, it is by no means justifiable to assume the correctness of any particular tradition. Again, as we have already pointed out, when we hold nine years estimate to be incorrect, we do not mean that the traditions giving that

* Tabaqat, Vol. VIII, pp. 39, 40.
† Tahzibut-Tahzib, Vol. IX, pp. 366-68.
‡ Nauwi, as quoted by Gurgani, Vol. I, p. 374, and Vol. I, p. 230. Aini, Commentary on Bukhari, Vol. I, p. 45. Nawahibul Ladunniya, Chapter on Ayesha ; Tarikh-i-Yafi'i, Wafa, and Usdul-Ghabba, quoted by Kamus, Vol. I, p. 403.
§ Zurqani, Vol. III, p. 230.
¶ Zurqani, Vol. III, p. 230.

estimate are not authentic. Again, the wonder is that in two places Zurqani himself elsewhere in the same work gives preference to the view that the correct date is Shawwal, *2 A. H.**

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Under these circumstances, the report pertaining to Shawwal, *1 A. H.* cannot be accepted in preference to the other report, and the truth is that it was in the second year of Hijra that Ayesha entered the Holy Prophet's *harem.*

Now when the date of birth and the date of Ayesha's being conducted to the Holy Prophet have been determined, it is an easy thing to tell the age of Ayesha at the latter date. It is in fact a simple arithmetical sum which can be worked out even by a child. Ayesha was born in the beginning of the fourth year of the Holy Prophet's mission. The Holy Prophet emigrated from Mecca in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal in the fourteenth year of his mission.† Thus at the time of emigration, Ayesha's age was 10 years *plus* some months. The period which elapsed from the emigration (Rabi-ul-Awwal, *1 A. H.*) till her admission into the Holy Prophet's house (Shawwal, *2 A. H.*) amounts to a little less than two years. When this period is added to Ayesha's age at the time of emigration, (10 years *plus* some months), we get twelve years; and this is the age which we gave in the beginning of this article. Even if we follow the report mentioned by Ibn-i-Sa'd and suppose that Ayesha was conducted to the Holy Prophet in the first year of Hijra in the month of Shawwal, her age works up to eleven years and not nine or ten. This is the result of an arithmetical calculation in the face of which no conjectural estimate can be accepted.

But the question arises, why did Ayesha give her age to be nine years, as she is reported to have said in a number of traditions ? The answer to this question is, that we do not deny the authenticity of these reports, *i.e*, we admit that such indeed was her view but at the same time we hold that it was

* Zurqani Vol. II, p. 1 ; Vol. III, p. 203.
† Tabri, Vol. I, pp. 363, 364.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

not correct. And this is not a matter to be wondered at, for we know that men sometimes do err in making an estimate of their age.

If by comparing the date of birth with the date of her being conducted to the Holy Prophet, (or the date of her *rukhsatana* as we call it in Urdu), and computing the period that elapsed between the two dates, the age of Ayesha on the latter date does not amount to nine, we can not follow those traditions which give her age as nine, merely because Ayesha estimated her age at nine These traditions could be relied upon only if any report should give the date of Ayesha's birth as other than the beginning of the 4th year of the Holy Prophet's mission, or if the date of her *rukhsatana* is proved to be other than Shawwal, *2 A. H.* In that case, of course, we shall have to base our calculation on these traditions. But we cannnot reject the result of an arithmetical calculation merely for a conjectural estimate and a surmise, even if it be given in authentic traditions.

So far we have dealt with the question in principle. But the truth is that if we closely examine even the traditions, which give the age of Ayesha, as estimated by her, even these lead to the same conclusion that we have arrived at above, *viz.*, that Ayesha was twelve years old at the time of her *rukhsatana.* In order to understand this, we must bear in mind that Ayesha gave not only an estimate of her age at the time of *rukhsatana*, but also of that her age at the time when her marriage ceremony was performed at Mecca ; and both these estimates have been mentioned simultaneously in the books of *Hadith* and history. We find that Ayesha has been repeatedly reported to have said that at the time of the marriage ceremony she was six or seven years old and that at the time of her *rukhsatana* she was nine, (or 10 according to certain traditions). Naturally, we should take the first of these two estimates which relates to the marriage ceremony to be more correct ; for *firstly*, this estimate relates to a younger age, when the possibility of error is comparatively little ; *secondly*, that being the first estimate, it must be taken as the basis, and the estimate about the latter age must be taken

as dependent on that estimate and not independent ones. Hence when dealing with these estimates, we will have to start with the first estimate, which relates to the time of the marriage ceremony and wherein the age has been described to be six or seven as our basis for calculation. Now when we reckon her age at the time of *rukhsatana* on the basis of the first estimate, her age turns out to be 12 years, and not nine or ten.

Before however, we come to that calculation, we must settle whether her age was six years or seven years at the time of the marriage ceremony. We have already pointed out that some traditions give the age of Ayesha at the marriage ceremony as six years and some as seven years. Both these kinds of traditions are to be found both in books of *Hadith* and the books of History. The traditions giving seven years as the age of Ayesha at the marriage ceremony have been particularly mentioned in *Sahih Muslim and Nasai,** *Ibn-i-Hisham,*† *Ibn i-Sa'd*‡ and *Tabri* § As against this, the tradition giving six years as her age is mentioned in all the aforesaid books with the exception of *Ibn-i-Hisham,* and besides these it finds mention in *Bukhari* also Now we have to see which of the two classes of traditions is preferable. Everybody who has some acquaintance with the science of *Hadith* will admit that so far as authenticity is concerned both these classes of traditions are equally correct and trustworthy, and we cannot reject any of them as incorrect. Hence we shall have to admit that Ayesha herself gave two different estimates of her age on different occasions, sometimes describing her age as six and sometimes as seven and sometimes joining both the estimates by saying that at the time of the marriage ceremony her age was six or seven. In point of authenticity we cannot discriminate between these two sets of traditions. But when we consider them rationally we have to give the seven years estimate preference over the other. For, it is a general custom that until a year is completed the age is indicated by the lower year, the additional fraction being overlooked. The higher year is mentioned only when it

* As quoted by Zurqani, Vol. 3, p. 230.
† Vol. 3, p. 94.
‡ Vol. 8, p. 41, line 26.
§ Vol. 3, p. 1262, line 7.

is either wholly completed or so near completion that for practical purposes it may be taken as completed. The mention of six years as the age of Ayesha in some traditions and the mention of seven years in others, therefore, indicates that at the time of her marriage, the age of Ayesha had passed six and had come so near seven that it was justifiable to call it seven according to the general usage. As however the seventh year was not quite completed, the age was sometimes represented as six, but practically speaking she was seven years old. It is owing to this that we find that some historians have ignored the estimate relating to six years and have only given seven years as her age For instance, *Ibn-i-Hisham* makes no mention of six years at all and only mentions seven years.* On the other hand, I have not come across any reliable work of history which has confined itself to the mention of six years only. Again, the author of the *Sirat-i-Halbiyya* gives seven years as the age of Ayesha at the time of the marriage ceremony, when he speaks of her under the heading of " Wives of the Holy Prophet " ; † and when he elsewhere speaks of Ayesha's marriage ceremony, he refers to both classes of traditions, but expressly states that the report relating to seven years is preferable.‡

Under these circumstances, although both sets of traditions are technically authentic, yet when considered rationally, they leave no doubt as to the fact that at the time of her marriage ceremony, Ayesha was seven years of age, or was so near completing the seventh year that practically she might be taken as seven years old.

It having been now established that Ayesha was seven years old at the time of the marriage ceremony, the remaining calculation is easy. As we have already said, the marriage ceremony took place in the month of Shawwal in the 10th year of the Holy Prophet's mission§—a date generally admitted to be correct by historians. Thus Ayesha was seven years old or thereabouts in the month of Shawwal in the 10th year of the

* Ibn-i-Hisham, Vol. III, p. 94.
† Siratul-Halbiyya, Vol. III, p. 352.
‡ Siratul-Halbiyya, Vol. I, p. 379.
§ Ibn-i-Sa'd, Vol. VIII, p. 39.

Holy Prophet's mission. The Flight of the Holy Prophet from Medina took place in the month of Rabi'ul Awwal in the 14th year of his mission, *i.e.*, three years and five months after the marriage ceremony. Thus at the time of the Flight, Ayesha's age was 10 years and some months. Let us now see the duration of time that passed between the Flight and the *rukhsatana*. It is an admitted fact that the Flight took place in the month of Rabi'ul-Awwal. Thus the first year of Hijra was of nine months and a half, and as the *rukhsatana* took place in the month of Shawwal in the second year of Hijra, this means that it came about when $9\frac{1}{2}$ months had passed away out of the second year. Both these periods, (*i.e.*, the $9\frac{1}{2}$ months of the first year of Hijra, and $9\frac{1}{2}$ months of the second year), being added together make 19 months, *i.e.*, 1, year and 7 months. Add this period to 10 years and some months—the age of Ayesha at the time of Flight—and we get 12 years as the age of Ayesha at the time of her *rukhsatana*. This figure fully tallies with the result at which we arrived at by following a different process.

In short, whether we calculate the age of Ayesha taking as our basis Ayesha's own estimate of her age at the time of the marriage ceremony, or we count her age from the date of her birth, the result in both cases is the same, *i.e.*, the age of Ayesha at the time of her *rukhsatana* turns out to be twelve and not nine; and certainly Ayesha's own view that her age was nine was based on a misjudgment or a miscalculation. It appears that when she estimated her age at the time of the marriage ceremony at six, ignoring the additional fraction, then she did not carefully count the period between the marriage ceremony and the *rukhsatana*, but only made a rough estimate to the effect that her age at the time of the *rukhsatana* was nine years, and afterwards this notion became firmly rooted in her mind. Or, as calendars had not yet come into existence, and the Hijra era had not been fully regulated, and further the period between the marriage ceremony and the *rukhsatana* belonged to two different eras—the earlier part of it being counted from the date of the Holy Prophet's entry upon his prophetic career, and the latter from the date of his Flight from Mecca, it is quite possible, under these

circumstances, that she should have made a mistake in her calculation, and then this mistaken view should have become so deeply rooted in her mind that she should have never afterwards thought of her miscalculation.

Anyhow, if it is true that Ayesha was seven years old when the marriage ceremony was performed, then nine years estimate of her age at the time of the *rukhsatana* can in no case be accepted as true. It is a question of arithmetical calculation against which no argument can hold good.

To sum up, examine it as we may from any point of view, the age of Ayesha at the time of her *rukhsatana* proves to be twelve or nearly twelve. And if we suppose that the *rukhsatana* took place in the first year of Hijra, even then she must be held to be eleven years old, and argue as we may, nine years estimate turns out to be erroneous and incorrect.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

If, however, we suppose for argument's sake that Ayesha was really 9 years old at the time of her *rukhsatana*, even then there is no ground for any objection, for in a country like Arabia it was by no means improbable for a girl to attain to puberty at the age of 9 or 10. Even in India, some girls who have an unusual capacity for growth attain to puberty at the age of 10. In fact attainment of puberty really depends on climate, diet and environments. In cold countries, girls take a long time to attain to puberty and generally do so at the age of 18, and they are generally married at 20, and sometimes even later than that. In India, on the other hand, if a girl remains unmarried up to the age of 20, people begin to suspect that there is something wrong with her which is hindering her marriage, for here the average age for puberty is 13 or 14. But as Arabia is even hotter and drier than India, the age of puberty there is lower still, and there are found girls who attain to puberty at the age of 9 or 10. In Ayesha's case it should particularly be remembered that she developed with unusual rapidity, as is admitted by Sir William Muir himself.*

*Life of Muhammad, by Sir W. Muir, pp. 110, 171.

THE TEACHINGS OF KRISHNA

The teachings of Krishna are contained in the Bhagavad Gita, an episode in the Mahabharta. We are not concerned with the question of its date. It may be as old as the 15th century B. C. as Dhirenda Nath Paul attempts to show, or it may be as recent as the 3rd century A. D. as John Davies has shown. One thing is certain, *viz.*, that it was written long after the time of Krishna, while it is equally true that it has been receiving additions and alterations from time to time. Thus Paul says in the introduction to his "Life and Teachings of Krishna": "The present Mahavarta itself says in the Adi Parva—'Vyasa originally compiled the Bharta, exclusive of Episodes, in twenty-four thousand *Slokas*.' But the present Mahavarta contains instead of twenty-four thousand *Slokas*, no less than 107,390 *Slokas*. It contains a table of contents, of no less than 268 *Slokas* instead of 150 *Slokas*. This is a clear indication that many thousand *Slokas* have been added to the original Mahavarta in the course of many thousand years." And again: "When it was recited by Ugras-rava in the Naimisha forest, it had even then gone through some additions and alterations, and a difference of opinion had already arisen about the various readings of its text." From these quotations it is clear that leaving apart the alterations which the teachings of Krishna must have undergone in oral transmission, they could not escape alterations and interpolations when reduced to writing in the Bhagavad Gita. If there are sufficient reasons for not admitting any doctrine laid down in the Gita, as the teaching of Krishna, we shall have to reject it as an error introduced after his time.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

ERRORS OF EARLIER HINDUS

Anyone who is acquainted with the history of the Hindu religion will be astonished to find that in the Gita he is transported into quite a different region. Krishna's conception

of the Divine Being is so high that it cannot be traced to any ideas current in his own time or among his own people. We do not deny that the doctrine of Divine Unity may have been preached to the Hindus at an earlier time or in the Vedas, but this doctrine, if it was ever taught, was hidden at the time of Krishna's appearance under element-worship and the acknowledgment of various gods and goddesses, as the Vedas in their present form abundantly prove, and the philosophical systems of Hinduism had introduced many other errors with regard to the Divine attributes. Not only had the truth been buried under a lifeless ceremonial, but even the Supreme Deity was neglected for the minor gods to whom different functions and different degrees of power were ascribed by their worhippers. Krishna found the Hindus involved in this state of darkness and ignorance at the time of his appearance. The Gita bears witness to this spiritual degradation of the Hindus. Thus in the fourth chapter we find the following statement: "For, whenever piety decays, O Son of Bharata! and impiety is in the ascendant, then I produce myself. For the protection of good men, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the re-establishment of piety, I am born from age to age," (iv, 7, 8). As the prophets of God are the images and manifestations of the Divine Being, hence their coming into the world is described as as the advent of God Himself. It should also be noted that the two offices which Krishna ascribes to himself here are the protection of good men and the destruction of evil-doers. Thus also with regard to his last appearance at the end of *Kali-yuga*, it is said that he would destroy the wicked and protect the righteous. It is to these two functions that the two titles of the Promised Messiah revealed to him long since when he was addressed as Krishna refer, and thus it is that his praise is written in the Gita as is said in one of his revelations.

UNITY OF GOD

In short, Krishna found the Hindus involved in serious errors not only in practice but also in doctrine, and he taught them the truth in both matters. He laid great stress upon the

Unity of God and inculcated the worship of one God to the exclusion of all minor deities which the Hindus worshipped. "In his view," writes Mr. Davies in his introduction to the translation of Gita, "the Supreme Being is One, without a rival, without such attributes as were assigned to the gods in the popular belief, and unstained by any of their passions and vices." Consider the following verses of the Gita in which other gods beside God are condemned: "Of these, the wise man, ever devout, who worships the One, is the most excellent" (vii, 17). "They, whose knowledge has been carried away by lusts of any kind go to other gods, using diverse rites constrained by their own nature," (vii, 20). "A full assurance of blessedness I bring to those who worship Me and never seek refuge in another god, who are ever united to Me in devotion", (ix, 22). "They who are devoted by vows to gods; they who devote themselves to Pitris (ancestral names) go to Pitris; they who sacrifice to Bhutas (malignant goblins) go to Bhutas; they who worship Me alone, come to Me", (ix, 25). More than this, the doctrine of Unity which he teaches, is not a surface doctrine which he could learn from such superficial knowledge as a man might receive externally or from the working of his own mind. He dives deep into the spirit of Unity and soars high up into the spiritual regions, far above the level of his time. "Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice or givest, whatever austerity thou practisest, do it as an offering to Me", (ix, 27). There cannot be the least doubt that these teachings came from a higher than a mortal source. In fact their sublimity and the ignorance of the age in which Krishna lived, falsify every supposition except that he received them as an inspiration from the Divine Being. Such high spiritual teachings could not proceed from any other source.

CONCEPTION OF GOD

It is not only with respect to Divine Unity that the teachings of Krishna rise so high. His whole conception of the Divine Being is a very sublime one. According to him, God is the holiest of the holy, and the eternal creative power. He is

"the source of all the universe," (vii, 6), "the source of all things" from whom "the whole universe proceeds", (x, 8), "the supreme Brahma, the supreme abode, the best purification, the eternal Creator, Divine, First of gods, Unborn, the Lord", (x, 12), "Creator of all things, Lord of all, the God of gods, Ruler of the universe", (x, 15), "the Imperishable, Unseen, Unmanifested one, All-pervading and Incomprehensible and Eternal", (xii, 3). The conception of the Divine Being as a Creator of the universe, bespeaks with certainty a Divine origin of the words of Krishna, for all the philosophical systems of Hinduism, of which the Arya Samaj is a modern representative, have been involved in the serious error that God is not the Creator of the universe. Though the teachings of Krishna have not been preserved to us in their true and original purity, yet in that which is handed down to us, we see clear signs of the doctrine that he believed in the Divine attribute of creation.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

The only thing that can be said against the sublimity of the conception of God in the Gita, is the doctrine of incarnation, and the attribution to Krishna of the assumption of Divine power. But we are, by no means, prepared to attribute these teachings to Krishna. History tells us that no man with a head upon his shoulders ever claimed to be God, and that men have always been made gods after they ceased to live. The idea of the deification of a man gradually gains ground as a great man slides away into the hazy past. No sane man while walking upon this earth ever claimed, or was seriously taken to be a god. It is only when he passes away into the twilight of history that his figure becoming more and more dim gradually enlarges in the eye of the beholder, and that the hero is converted into a god. So it happened with Christ and so also with Krishna. There exists to this day some evidence of the gradual development of the idea of Krishna-worship. "The Vaishnavas," we are told by Dr. Davies, "promoted his claim, but it was affirmed by many that he was only a man; for in the Bhishma Parvan it is said: 'Whoever says that he (Krishna) was a mere man is of dull intellect.' If in some few passages he is represented as being the origin of all things, these are so contrary

to the general tone of the poem on this subject that, with Dr. Muir, we are compelled to assume that they are later interpolations. It is not until we come to the Puranas that he appears as the Supreme Deity beyond all doubt or cavil, and the earliest of these books, the Vayu Purana, has, by general consent, no higher antiquity than the sixth century A. D." Moreover, it appears from other parts of the Mahabharta that Krishna, himself offered worship to Mahadeva. Similarly we are told in another book called " Drona-Parvan" that Krishna and Arjun bowed their heads to the ground before the Supreme Being.

KRISHNA MISUNDERSTOOD

Leaving aside the tendency of the Hindus to creature-worship from the earliest times to which their history can be traced, it is easy to see that the words of a prophet who speaks as the mouthpiece of the Divine Being can be easily misconstrued. For instance, in the whole of the Holy Quran, the Person speaking is Almighty God, yet all these words came from the mouth of the Holy Prophet. But it would be a fatal mistake to ascribe to the Holy Prophet the powers and attributes which are ascribed by the Holy Quran to Almighty God. Some such mistake could have easily occurred in the case of Krishna. When he said, for instance, " I am the source of all the things, the whole universe proceeds from me," he was speaking only as a mouthpiece of the Divine Being. The " I " here is Almighty God Himself, Who is the true speaker, and not Krishna who is only the mouthpiece. Moreover, Krishna denounces in emphatic terms the worship of other gods and enjoins only the worship of the Supreme Being. Now among the " other gods," all those men are also included who were taken for gods. How could a sensible man denounce the worship of other mortals who were looked upon as gods and then present himself as *Avatar* to be worshipped ? WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE BEING ONLY, ALL OTHERS FOR WHOM PRETENSIONS OF DIVINITY WERE PUT FORWARD, ARE HATEFUL TO KRISHNA "They whose knowledge has been carried away by lusts of any kind, go to other gods." Now all these purely monotheistic teachings are strangely inconsistent

with the idea of a man-god. We should not be misunderstood. We do not mean to say that the Gita is free from this error. It does ascribe to Krishna the teaching that he was god-incarnate, but there is the clearest internal evidence of the other portions of the Gita itself, that it is a later interpolation and that Krishna is by no means responsible for this error. It is impossible that a man who lays stress upon Divine Unity and denounces the worship of any god besides the one Supreme Being, should lay claim to Godhead. It is an error of which the holy Krishna ought to be cleared. In fact the very idea of incarnation is inconsistent with the mission of a true prophet of God who He comes to impart spirituality to the world which is involved in gross materialism. But with the growth of materialism, which again gains ground when a prophet's spiritual teachings are lost sight of, the conception of God undergoes a similar change. Thus it would be seen that in every religious movement, where a man has been made a god, the idea of incarnation is of a later origin. The Gita itself says: "The foolish think that I, the Unmanifested, am endowed with a manifest form." Here the doctrine of incarnation is plainly rejected.

TRANSMIGRATION OF SOUL NOT TAUGHT BY KRISHNA

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Another objectionable doctrine taught in the Gita and ascribed to Krishna is the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. We have, therefore, to see if this doctrine is consistent with the other doctrines taught by Krishna. The doctrine of transmigration requires, on the one hand, that God should not be the Creator of souls, and on the other, that salvation should be temporary. This is too clear a fact to need any discussion. Now both these doctrines do not find any place in the Gita so far as we have read it. It has already been shown that Krishna sincerely believed and taught that Almighty God was the Creator of all things and the source of the whole universe and that it was from Him that everything proceeded. The teachings on this point are too clear, and great emphasis has been laid upon it. Therefore, we would be guilty of the gravest injustice in

ascribing to Krishna any doctrine which is contradicted by this plain and sensible teaching. The acknowledgment of the divine attribute of creation runs throughout the Gita, and therefore a statement occurring once or twice that the soul never began to be, must be regarded as an interpolation. TRUE SALVATION ALSO, ACCORDING TO KRISHNA, IS ETERNAL. "He whose soul is unattached to outward contacts, finds happiness in himself; his soul, joined by devotion to Brahma, enjoys eternal blessedness; for, *the pleasures that are born of those contacts are the wombs of pain: they begin and end, O son of Kunti! not in them the wise man delights*" (v: 21, 22). "For supreme happiness come to the Yogin whose heart is at rest, in whom passion is tranquillised, who is one with Brahma, and free from sin. The Yogin ever thus uniting his soul (to Brahma), who has ceased from sin, enjoys easily the boundless happiness of union with Brahma" (vi: 27, 28). Some men think that Krishna speaks of two kinds of salvation, a temporary salvation and a permanent salvation. Salvation, it will be admitted, means a state of freedom from sin and union with God. It is taken in the same sense in the Gita. Therefore, a temporary salvation should mean, if it has any significance at all, a temporary state of freedom from sin and a temporary union with God. Krishna does not hold the view that men attain to such a state. According to his view the union with God, the Supreme Being, is a union which lasts for ever, as is evident from the above quotations. Yet he speaks of the enjoyments of even those who go to other gods, enjoyments of which they are soon deprived. In the Gita these, too, are called the enjoyments of heaven. This, however, is not the true and real heaven, but it is the lower heaven, the heaven of Indra and other gods whose worship Krishna so forcibly denounces. These enjoyments are not, therefore, the true heavenly enjoyments, nor can this state be called a state of salvation. To ascertain the nature of these enjoyments, we again refer to the Gita. "Following the three Holy Books (the Vedas) and desiring the objects of the senses, they obtain that which comes and goes. A full assurance of blessedness I bring to those who worship Me and never seek refuge in another (god), who are ever united to

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Me in devotion", (ix : 21, 22). Here the nature of these temporary enjoyments is clearly described. Though following the sacred books, these men are yet slaves to their passions and desires. They do not worship God, but seek the refuge of other gods. They cannot, therefore, be purified from sins, nor can they have any union with God, and hence they cannot attain to the state of salvation which man aspires to. They have pleasure which "comes and goes" and this cannot be the heavenly bliss which a true worshipper of God obtains by a union with Him. It is, therefore, the false satisfaction which the worshipper of false gods may have for a time but of which he is soon deprived, because his support is frail. The god he trusts is nothing, and so his pleasure too, which he may have for a time, but which he ultimately finds changed into grief and sorrow. Thus further on the Gita says : "But these men know Me not in truth, and therefore they fall. They who are devoted by vows to gods go to gods;.....they who worship Me alone, come to Me." Elsewhere it is said that they who are carried away by their lusts, go to other gods. Their state is not, therefore, a state of salvation at all. They are deceived and the heaven they think they have attained to, is really a hell, "*for the pleasures that are born of these contact are the wombs of pain* (v : 22).

From what we have said above, it is clear that Krishna does not teach a temporary salvation at all. With him the way of obtaining salvation is the true Islamic way. A sinful man is not debarred from heaven if he purifies his soul, and in this there is a wide departure from the common Hindu view which sticks to the doctrine of transmigration. "Even if one of evil life worships Me with exclusive worship, he must be accounted as a good man, for he has judged rightly. Soon he becomes a pious man and attains to eternal peace. Be well assured, O Son of Kunti! that he who worships Me, does not perish. For they who find refuge in Me, O Son of Pritha ! though they have been conceived in sin, women too, Vaisyas and even Sudras, these go to the highest way", (ix : 30-32). This strikes at the root of the doctrine of transmigration, for according to it a sinful man cannot obtain salvation unless he has gone through an innumerable series of births, nor can a woman attain to this height.

In fact, the ultimate object of the teachings of every prophet of God as well as its means of attainment are the same. Since Almighty God revealed His words to man, He has pointed out only one way of salvation and that is the purification of the soul. It is upon this that every prophet of God has laid stress, and it is by acting upon this principle that any good can proceed to humanity. This remarkable resemblance in the teachings of men, who have appeared in different countries and different ages, shows clearly that these teachings are all drawn from the same source,—a source far above the human resources which they could draw upon. Wrong inferences have also been deduced from these resemblances. For instance, the Christian missionaries have made attempts to establish an actual connection between the teachings of Krishna and those of Christ. They try to prove that the former borrowed from the latter, and this on the basis of a certain similarity between the ideas expressed by them. They think the power of God to be so limited that He could not reveal His Will to any people save the Israelites, or through any person except Jesus Christ. And if the question comes to borrowing, why should it not be said that Jesus borrowed from the teachings of Krishna ? But the fact is that to every nation God gave a guidance, but for which it could not have stepped out of a state of savagery. Krishna was sent to the Hindus and he taught them what other prophets taught the people to whom they were sent, *viz.*, an entire submission to the Will of God, the subduing of passions and carnal desires, and the purification of the soul. Such is the teaching of Krishna. Errors have no doubt crept into it, but it was necessary that it should have so happened, for it had been foretold that a time would come when people would forget the true teachings of Krishna, and evil would spread upon the earth, and that the spiritual manifestation of Krishna would appear in the last ages to remove these errors. All these promises have come to fulfilment, and blessed are they who recognise the messenger of God, and follow the truth, for they would inherit eternal bliss.

CONCLUSION

Like the Christians some Muhammadans also rashly deny that Krishna was a prophet or that a prophet was ever sent to the people of India. The Holy Quran tells us in clear words that before the appearance of the Holy Prophet, prophets were sent to every people. It also tells us that there are prophets whom it has not mentioned. When we see how the Christians corrupted the teachings of Jesus Christ in the near past, it is not improbable, nay it appears to be certain, that with the lapse of time many errors found their way into the pure and divine teachings of Krishna. If it is difficult to recognise Jesus Christ as a true prophet from the erroneous teachings ascribed to him, it is much more difficult to find out Krishna from the midst of errors, which have been introduced into his teachings. But the fact remains, in spite of these difficulties, that there are noble sentiments expressed in the teachings of Krishna, which cannot be ascribed to any but a Divine source, and that he too was a prophet of god and taught the Unity of God, life after death and eternal salvation.

Make a presentation of this Copy to your friends

TRUTH OF THE HOLY PROPHET AND HIS SUPERIORITY TO ALL OTHER PROPHETS*

BY THE PROMISED MESSIAH (*peace be on him*)

History proves abundantly and the Holy Quran refers in clear and unambiguous terms in various places to the fact that the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and the blessings of Allah be on him), took place at a time when idolatry, superstition and creature-worship reigned supreme all over the world and all people had abandoned the truth, and having forgotten the right path, each community had adopted its own course of corruption. In Arabia itself idolatry was in full swing; in Persia fire-worship had caught the imagination of the people; in India in addition to idolatry, various kinds of creature-worship had come into vogue, and it was at this time that the Hindu Scriptures called "Puranas", which exalted scores of men to the dignity of God-head and laid the foundation of "Avatar worship" were written. As to Christianity, it was the worst of all religions in the opinion of Rev. Mr. Robart and other eminent English thinkers, and the lax morals and impiety of the Christian clergy were a blot on the Christian religion; and according to Christian beliefs, not one or two, but many sons of Adam had usurped the place of God. Hence the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (may peace and the blessings of God be on him), at a time of such universal religious degeneration when the very conditions of the age sorely demanded a great Reformer and Redeemer and Divine guidance, and his inspiring a whole populace with an ardent love of monotheism and good deeds, and his stamping out of idolatry and creature-worship, the mother of all evils, are eloquent testimonies to the fact that he was a ture prophet of God and superior to all other prophets. His truth is evident from the fact that at that time of universal religious

* Translated from the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya by Mr. Daulat Ahmad Khan, B. L.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah
degradation, the world was in sore need of a true guide and God's law demanded a true reformer. Hence, just as at the time of draught when the whole world is on the point of destruction on account of famine, God sends down His rain ; and just as at the time when millions of lives are lost through the outbreak of some pestilence, the atmosphere clears up and some heavenly remedy comes into existence ; and just as at the time when a nation is in the grip of a tyrant, some one rises up to mete out justice to the oppressed and to redress their grievances, so also there is a divine law which has been in operation from times immemorial, and it is that when some kind of evil and impiety reaches its limits, God's mercy turns to the removal of the same ; that is to say, when people forget the path of God and forsake monotheism and love of truth, the Creator endows some one from among His servants with perfect vision and grants him the honour of communion with Him and revelation from Him for the guidance of humanity, so that he may restore them to their original piety and purity. The secret underlying this principle is that the Lord Who is the Sustainer of the worlds and to Whose sustaining shelter and protection is due the very existence, and perpetuation of the same does not withhold the operation of any of His benign attributes from His creation nor does He make it inactive or passive, but each attribute of His comes into play as soon as there is an occasion for it. Therefore since by the mere exercise of reason, the proposition becomes self-evident that with a view to uproot an evil, that attribute of God which is its very antithesis comes into operation, and since it is a fact that at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (may peace and the blessings of Allah be on him), the evil of abandonment by all the races and nations of the world of the straight path of the Unity of God, sincerity and love of truth, was becoming uppermost and it is universally known that it was the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and the blessings of Allah be on him), and none else who uprooted the evil, which thus subsisted, and brought a whole world out from the darkness of idolatry and worship of living beings, and restored them to monotheism ; the conclusion irresistibly follows that the Holy Prophet was a true prophet of

God. It is for this reason that God also draws our attention to this argument in the following Quranic verses :—

تا لله لقد ارسلنا الى امم من قبلك فزين لهم الشيطان اعمالهم فهو وليهم اليوم ولهم عذاب اليم- وما انزلنا عليك الكتاب الا لتبين لهم الذي اختلفوا فيه وهدي ورحمة لقوم يومنون- والله انزل من السماء ماء فاحيا به الارض بعض موتها- ان في ذالك لاية لقوم يسمعون- (سورة النحل الجزو ١٤)

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

i.e., "We swear by the ever Existence of Godhead, the Sole Source of all favours of guidance and sustenance and the collection of all the perfect attributes that We sent to many communities and the races prophets before you but the former became corrupted through the seduction of Satan and hence to-day Satan is their friend, adviser and guide ; and this Book has been revealed that the points of differences among them may be decided and the fact is that the whole world had become dead, so God sent down water from the heavens and restored anew the dead earth to life. This is a sign of the truth of this Book for a people who hear *i.e.*, for the seekers-after-truth."

Now see how nicely and beautifully the above mentioned three propositions from which we have deduced the truth of the Holy Prophet as a divine guide have been embodied in the verses referred to above. First, by comparing the hearts of those who are led astray and who continue in that state for centuries to a dry and dead earth, and the word of God *i.e.*, revelation, to water which comes from the heaven, attention has been drawn to that primeval law on account of which at the time of extreme dearth of rain, the mercy of God saves humanity from utter destruction ; and it has also been made manifest that the operation of this law is not confined only to physical water but that at the time of extreme spiritual drought which is synonymous with the spread of general decay in religion, spiritual water also descends and in that case also divine mercy manifests itself with a view to break up the predominance of corrupted

human hearts. Secondly, in those verses it has also been pointed out that at the time of the Holy Prophet's advent the whole world was corrupted, and in this way it has been claimed that those spiritually dead were restored to life by the holy words of God. Thirdly, it has been shown at the end of the verses that in this fact there is the sign of the truth of this Book. God has thereby directed the seekers after truth to draw the conclusion that the Holy Quran is the Book of God.

Just as this argument on the one hand proves that the Holy Prophet was a true prophet of God, so it also proves his superiority to all other prophets in as much as he had to face the whole world, and the task that was entrusted to him was really the task of a thousand or two thousand prophets; but since it was decreed by the Almighty God that the entire human race should be like one nation and one community and all ideas of strangeness and alienism should vanish and that this race of humanity should end as it began in unity, He sent His last guidance as one common Code to the whole world. And on account of the opening of roads of communication and commencement of mutual intercourse between nations and countries, a process of unification was already in progress, and on account of such intercourse becoming permanent the thoughts and ideas of one country began to influence other countries, which process is still in progress and all the means of communication such as railways, telegraphs, steamships etc., invented by human genius unmistakably go to show that it is the intention of the Omnipotent Creator to convert one day all the nations of the world into one nation. However, the missions of previous prophets were limited, for, their message was confined to particular tribes but the mission of the Holy Prophet was unlimited and universal for his message was universal. This is the reason why the Holy Quran contains a refutation of all the false religions of the world while the New Testament refers to the lax morals of the Jews only. Therefore the superiority and pre-eminence of the Holy Prophet is evident from the universality of his mission Moreover, the fact is self-evident that to stamp out idolatry and worship

of living beings, and to deeply impress on human hearts the theory of monotheism and the glory of God, are the highest and most excellent of virtues. Can anybody then deny that these virtues have been displayed by the Holy Prophet to an extent absolutely unparalleled in the history of the prophets? There is no other book in the world besides the Holy Quran which has kept errors of God's creatures firmly embedded to the doctrine of His unity and it is manifest that the greatest is he who brings about the greatest reformation.

It may be noted in passing here that Rev. Fander in his book entitled "Mizanul Huq" observes that as a matter of fact, at the commencement of Islam, the Christians were greatly degenerated and they had ceased to act upon the teachings of the Bible, and with respect to the Holy Prophet, the same Reverend gentleman says that it was for this reason that God did not prevent him (the Holy Prophet) from spreading his faith, because God decreed at that time to warn and punish the Christians for their lapse from the Bible. Now let us consider for a moment the honesty, sense of justice, and piety of the Reverend gentleman. What a perverted conclusion he has arrived at! He is prepared to see his co-religionists under the divine punishment but he won't accept the Holy Prophet. What a prejudice! punishment with a vengeance no doubt! But the pity of the whole thing is that in going to express this prejudiced view the Reverend gentleman has gone one step forward in the path of error and has manifested the worst kind of disbelief in God and the meanest kind of rashness and perversity. And it is a special feature of the Christian missionaries alone that in their enmity to the Holy Prophet, they do not scruple to deny even the attribute of God as a guide. Otherwise who with any degree of intelligence and faith in God can think that at a time when misguidance and erroneous beliefs had reached their limits and the world was engaged in the grossest form of idolatry and worship of creatures, God could device no other means and could provide no other remedy than what, in the opinion of the Christian missionaries, made things worse for humanity, and instead of raising a reformer, He

raised one who in their opinion destroyed what reforms had already been made *viz.*, that he could believe God to be absolutely immune from flesh and blood and free from birth, death, pain and sorrow? Can a man imagine and can the innate sense of justice of a man persuade him to hold the view that God the Bountiful and Merciful is possessed of such attributes and on seeing the world going astray from the straight path He devises such means? It is not at all difficult for an upright man to understand that the spread of general corruption in the world is the precursor of a reformer, and every intelligent man can understand that at the time of the predominance of ignorance and error the attribute of God as a guide should manifest itself to humanity. But how can a prejudiced man understand a thing? Has any blind man ever seen so that he should also see? Alas! these missionaries are not afraid of the day of requital inspite of such perverseness; and why should they? They have their firm faith in the vicarious atonement of Christ. Otherwise it is impossible for a man of average intelligence to suppose that the Christian missionaries are so devoid of understanding that as yet they have no knowledge of the eternal attributes of God and are prepared to believe that the very God, Who at the time of Moses (peace be on him) sent a prophet to deliver an oppressed race from the clutches of a tyrant, and Who at the time of Jesus (peace be on him) sent the Messiah at the lapse of the Jews from morality, was in the last ages so cruel and merciless that inspite of the whole world being steeped in idolatry and creature-worship, He did not think it necessary to send down guidance, rather He made things worse for those who had already gone astray, so that error in religion which was once so much displeasing in His eyes became now as it were something good.

ATONEMENT

By Mr. Abdullah R. Scott

The belief that Jesus Christ shed his blood on the cross for the remission of our sins, is held by the Christians in general, as the only means of access to eternal life, and they believe that Jesus' sacrifice of his own life for others is an example which is unrivalled in the annals of history.

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Now we admit, that sacrifice in its proper place, is a most noble deed, provided it is calculated to benefit those for whom it is intended, but in the case of the Christians we find that Christ's " sacrifice " is not included in this category.

According to the followers of Christ, mankind was under the curse of God for the sins of their ancestors Adam and Eve, and by his " death " on the cross Jesus took this curse upon himself thereby liberating mankind and giving them a free pass to eternal life. This is all very nice, but the pill is only sugar-coated, for on the other hand we are threatened with everlasting fire and punishment, (Matt. XIII, 42, Matt. XXV, 41 and 46). Again, since Jesus has taken the curse upon himself, he becomes automatically the accused of God and consequently, according to the laws laid down in the scriptures, he is condemned to hell-fire. Therefore, in this state he becomes powerless to do anything for the improvement of our spiritual welfare, because an accursed person cannot be an interceder for sinners.

Further, as the Christians believe him to be one of the three persons of the God-head, it makes matters worse. If one of the three persons has to undergo the tortures of Hades, then how can we expect to be saved ? Have we earned for ourselves any special qualities that should be more fortunate than God Himself, who has to suffer by first bearing a

curse followed by the execution of the Law upon the accursed ? (may God protect us from such blasphemous beliefs).

Christ's dying on the cross for our sins, is similar to that of a person knocking his brains out against a wall in order to cure another of a bad headache.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ATONEMENT

Atonement is not a thing that can be obtained through blood of any person, it is nothing more or less than the purification of one inner self. Christ's " death " on the cross does not make a saint of a sinner, nor does it improve one's character in the least ; but on the contrary tends to ruin it. Because it conveys the idea, that no matter in what immoral or degraded way we spend our lives, all bills have been paid for beforehand by the blood of Christ, and therefore we will not be required to render any account of our actions to God. The crucifixion cannot create in us that feeling of contentment of soul which true repentance brings to us. It does not take us to blissful spiritual heights wherein our soul delights in communion with its Creator, and I defy any Christian to prove otherwise.

Christ himself tells us that that eternal life is attainable only through good deeds and pure thoughts and obeying all the laws of God. For instance, we read in Luke, X : 25 to 28, " And, behold a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit Eternal Life ? He said unto him, what is written in the law ? how readest thou ? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind ; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right ; this do, and thou shalt live."

Again in Matt. XIX: 16 to 21, it says: " And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have Eternal Life ? And he said unto

him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandents. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus saith unto him, if thou wilt be PERFECT, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, AND THOU SHALT HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN; and come and follow me."

Further on in Matt. XXV, 46 we read:—"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the RIGHTEOUS INTO LIFE ETERNAL."

It is perfectly clear from these verses that Jesus Christ never intended us to believe in the absurd doctrine of the remission of our sins through his crucifixion on the cross.

Besides, what was the necessity of going to such an extreme when he was able to forgive sins himself during his lifetime? For instance, in Mark II, 5 we read: "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."

Again in Luke VII:48 it says: "And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven," and Luke VII: 50, "And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Here we are distinctly told that, because of the sincere faith, these people had their sins forgiven and were saved and told to "go in peace," although Christ had not yet made his "sacrifice."

WHAT JESUS MEANT

Digitized by Khilafat Library Rabwah

Jesus never meant his blood to be a ransom for our sins. He clearly tells us in the following verses, that unless we are purified of all the low desires of this world, we can never hope for salvation. He says: "For I say unto you, that except

your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, YE SHALL IN NO CASE ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN," (Matt. V:17-20). "Be ye therefore PERFECT even as your father which is in heaven is perfect," Matt. V: 48). "Every tree that bringeth not good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them," (Matt. VII: 19,20).

" Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; BUT HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And I will profess unto them, I never knew you: DEPART FROM ME YE THAT WORK INIQUITY," (Matt. XV: 28).

Besides Jesus Christ was not sent to save mankind in general. His own statement verifies this: " I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," (Matt. XV: 24).

I think that in face of these undeniable facts, the belief in salvation through the blood of Christ should give its farewell bow to the world, and vanish out of the existence like other pagan beliefs, as it is nothing but a cock and bull story invented by the arch-scoundrel Paul and his party.

Real atonement is only to be found in Islam; we are neither threatened with everlasting punishment nor a Paradise without a reckoning. The followers of Islam are known by the name of Muslims, and no person is entitled to be called as such, until he has wholly submitted all his faculties to the Will of the Almighty God. Hence his soul is purified and he is enabled to reach the highest pinnacle of spiritual bliss, at which stage the Almighty God reveals Himself and actually holds communion with His righteous servants in this life. In this manner Muslims entirely disconnect themselves from all worldly degradations and have their first taste of Paradise here on earth, which give them a certainty of faith and knowledge of God, and which fables of the past can never do.

OUR MISSION NEWS

ENGLAND

The Ahmadiyya Mission has been doing very substantial work in England. Not only the truth of Islam is conveyed to the people of England, but efforts are also being made to enable the new converts to act upon the teachings of Islam and to remodel their lives accordingly. Many of them have by this time learnt the Islamic mode of worship and begun to perform prayers five times a day regularly. Some of them observed fasting during the last *Ramdan*. They are found to be very eager to learn the Holy Quran and to act upon its injunctions. Discourses on the Holy Quran are held in the London Mosque and are attended by the people of the land. To get fresh knowledge about the teachings of Islam the new converts attend the Friday prayers. Enquiries are often made about the truth of Islam. Our missionaries attend to them and refute the charges which are levelled against Islam, and thereby remove the misunderstandings created by the enemies.

Besides, the mission has been acquainting the people of England, particularly the statesmen, with the existing condition of the Indian Muslims and their political rights and privileges.

The Mission is now in-charge of Maulvi Farzand Ali Khan, Imam of the London Mosque, assisted by an oriental scholar Maulvi Muhammad Yar Arif, H.A., who has been rendering a great help to the Imam. Considering the importance and magnitude of the work it is felt that the mission in England should be further strengthened.